

## SOCIOLOGY

**MacIver, R. M. and Page, Charles H.**  
*Society. An Introductory Analysis.*  
 London, 1950. Macmillan. Pp. 697.  
 Price 25s.

PROFESSOR MACIVER's well-known textbook, now first published in England, was intended for beginners in the study of sociology. There are, however, few beginners in the social sciences who can comfortably digest and absorb a book so relentlessly analytic as this. Professor MacIver and his collaborator, in their footnotes and their forty pages of "notes on further reading," give plentiful reminders of the rich findings of social investigators, so diverse in method, subject and range; but the body of their systematic exposition is austere bare. Those determined enough to read the whole work will acquire a comprehensive, well-articulated framework for their subsequent thinking and experience of social phenomena. It is composed of three books. The first book deals with introductory concepts in our approach to society and with the relation between man's environment and his social adjustment; here the interplay of genetic and extrinsic forces receives an impartial scrutiny, with special reference to the investigation of twins and of children brought up in foster homes. Book two expounds the social codes and *mores*, and the major forms of social structure within which are included the family, the community and various ethnic, racial, economic and other groups. Book three is concerned with social change. Here demographic variations and the range of social selection are reviewed, and, at the conclusion of the chapter, under the significant title, "The dark problem of social selection," the authors stress the contrast between the clearness of the causes and the obscurity of the results of this process; the contrast arises, in their view, chiefly because the whole social environment is changing at the same time as social selection is taking place. In the succeeding chapters the complexity of social change is recognized and is treated on lines very close to those already

familiar to readers of Professor MacIver's book on social causation. The authors are emphatic that social causation cannot be clearly understood if we merely enumerate the factors at work, set them side by side, and attribute to them differing degrees of influence. Study of people's attitudes, the means of adaptation at their disposal and the environment, which together condition or determine their changing objectives in social life, requires that the various factors must be significantly related to one another by the sociologist. In a complex society it is no longer possible, as it is in primitive societies with their all-embracing solidarity, for the individual to have his values integrated for him by the community with its accepted culture and *mores*; he has to do that for himself, and his personality is therefore far more important in deciding how he will live as a social unit than if he were a member of a simpler society.

HILDA LEWIS.

## STERILIZATION

**Woodside, Moya.** *Sterilization in North Carolina: a Sociological and Psychological Study.* 1950. University of North Carolina Press. (London: Geoffrey Cumberlege) Pp. 219. Price 20s.

THIS valuable book is a report by an Englishwoman on a twenty-year-old experiment carried out in one of the States of the U.S.A.

North Carolina, situated about midway down the Union's eastern seaboard, has an area slightly smaller than that of England and a population about a tenth of ours, which numbered 3½ million at the 1940 census. The distribution of this population between town and country is almost exactly the reverse of ours, 75 per cent being rural. The largest town contains 100,000 inhabitants. There are no great industrial centres, no metropolitan congestion, no concentration of urban slums and no spread of suburbs. Agriculture is the principal occupation, the chief crops being cotton, corn and tobacco.